



Setting The Scene

A COMMUNITY ARTS PROJECT AND PUBLICATION BY NORTHERN HEARTLANDS
LED BY ARTISTS DOMINIC SMITH AND RONAN DEVLIN WITH LOCAL RESIDENTS



Welcome to *Setting the Scene*, a community-driven project that celebrates the creative voices and stories of Coundon and Witton Park. This artists' newspaper represents and records creative time working with people across Coundon and Witton Park. Through audio, visual art, and storytelling, *Setting the Scene* brings together the ideas and expressions of those involved, blending a proud heritage with the community spirit that continues to thrive in these places today.

Every spread in this newspaper shares words, images, and sounds gathered, as we invited people to explore the past, present, and future of the places where they live. The printed QR codes link to audio artworks, capturing the soundscape of the community to complement the visual work that was made and reflect many of the voices and everyday sounds encountered.

Setting the Scene created opportunities for connection and collaboration in fun, engaging ways. We hope this project inspires ongoing efforts to amplify the voices of Coundon and Witton Park. This newspaper is just the start of more creative activity in the community. If you have any ideas about future projects or want to share work you are doing as an individual or group in the area, check the information about how to add to The Northern Heartlands Creative Directory online at: www.northernheartlands.org/settingthescene



Supported using public funding by
**ARTS COUNCIL
ENGLAND**

Thank you to the volunteers at Coundon and Leeholme Welfare Hall and Witton Park Village Hall, and to all local residents involved.
QR Audio Links: Dominic Smith | Design: Ronan Devlin



2

3

up the road

on the edge

this is paradise



staked trees

soldiers marching

side by side

on the green

rubble underneath

improving

the path

good view

hundreds of houses

demolished on both sides

a pub on every corner

eighty at one stage

skylines

industrial unit

a nice place

dolly parton

SETTING THE SCENE
undercover originals

practice

every

thursday

yeah



do

nothing

6

on



hold

yeah
yeah

right



6



not

really

for



anyone

else

cause

we

enjoy

doing

it

undercover

originals

haunted

where



back

in

school

underperformer

outperform



yeah



7



crafts, cakes, coffee



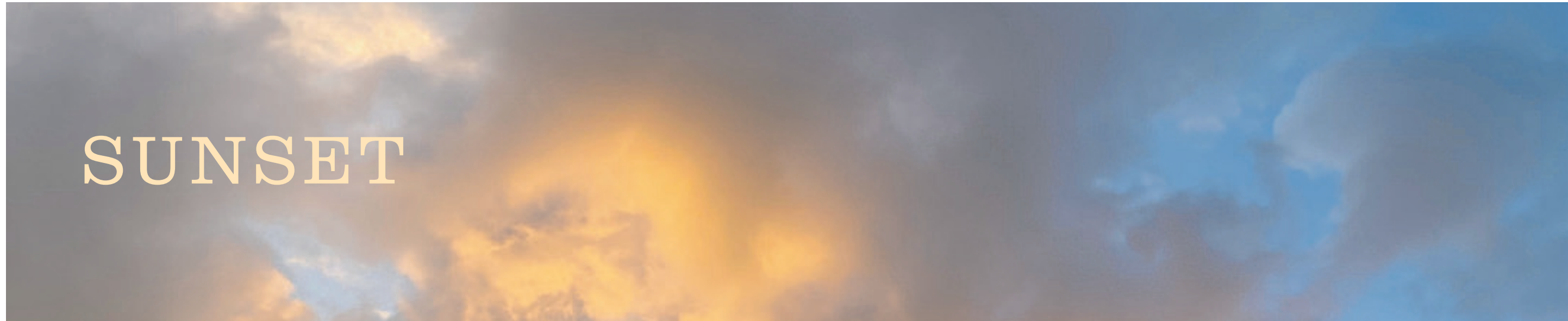
and years of stories



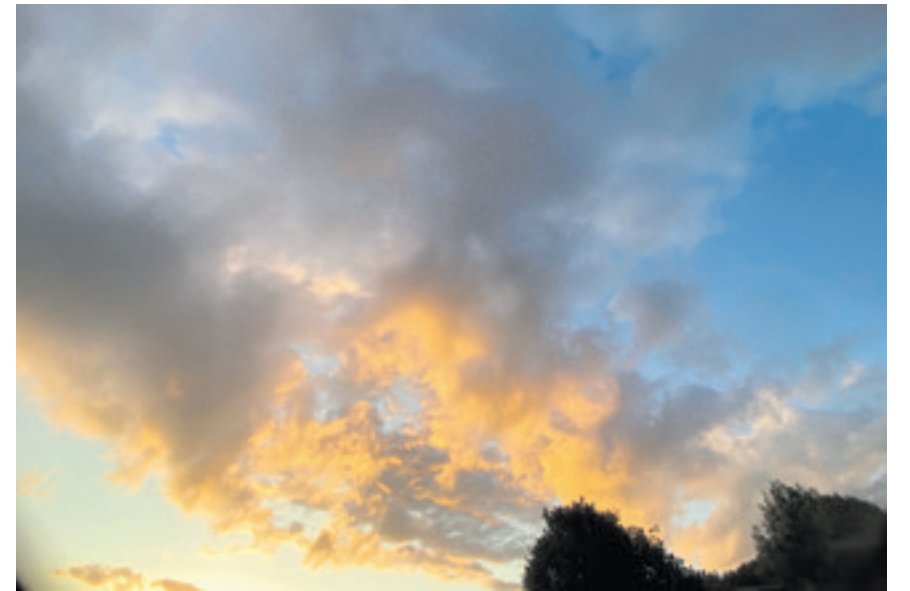
making clothes for



fish 'n' chip babies



SUNSET



On the 27th of September 1825,

The first of four Inclines along the track. This one at the start as it leaves the rear of Phoenix Row very different as to how it would have been 200 years ago. Well maintained by today's owner of the smallholding. Wonderful how nature can repair the scars made by man.



Here at the summit stood the winding engine, drawing the wagons up from the coalfield below over the hump and down the other side into the Gaunless valley and St Helen. The trees of the orchard still bear fruit, more than sixty years since the last inhabitants moved away, emigrating to a new life in Canada.



There are some dry stone walls around the site of the reservoir where you can see some reused two hole stone sleepers incorporated into the structure, along with more complex architectural fragments, presumably from the Engine House.



An example of the locally sourced sleeper blocks with their two holes to which the iron rail was secured, evidence of the Industrial Revolution which was to arrive in this corner of South Durham, on 27th September 1825, at precisely 7.00am.

The stationary beam engine at the Etherley summit needed these two man made ponds for its power. Today a quiet backwater along the line to the Tees.



Former track bed of the original line from 1825. Today a place where locals would bramble, at this time of year.

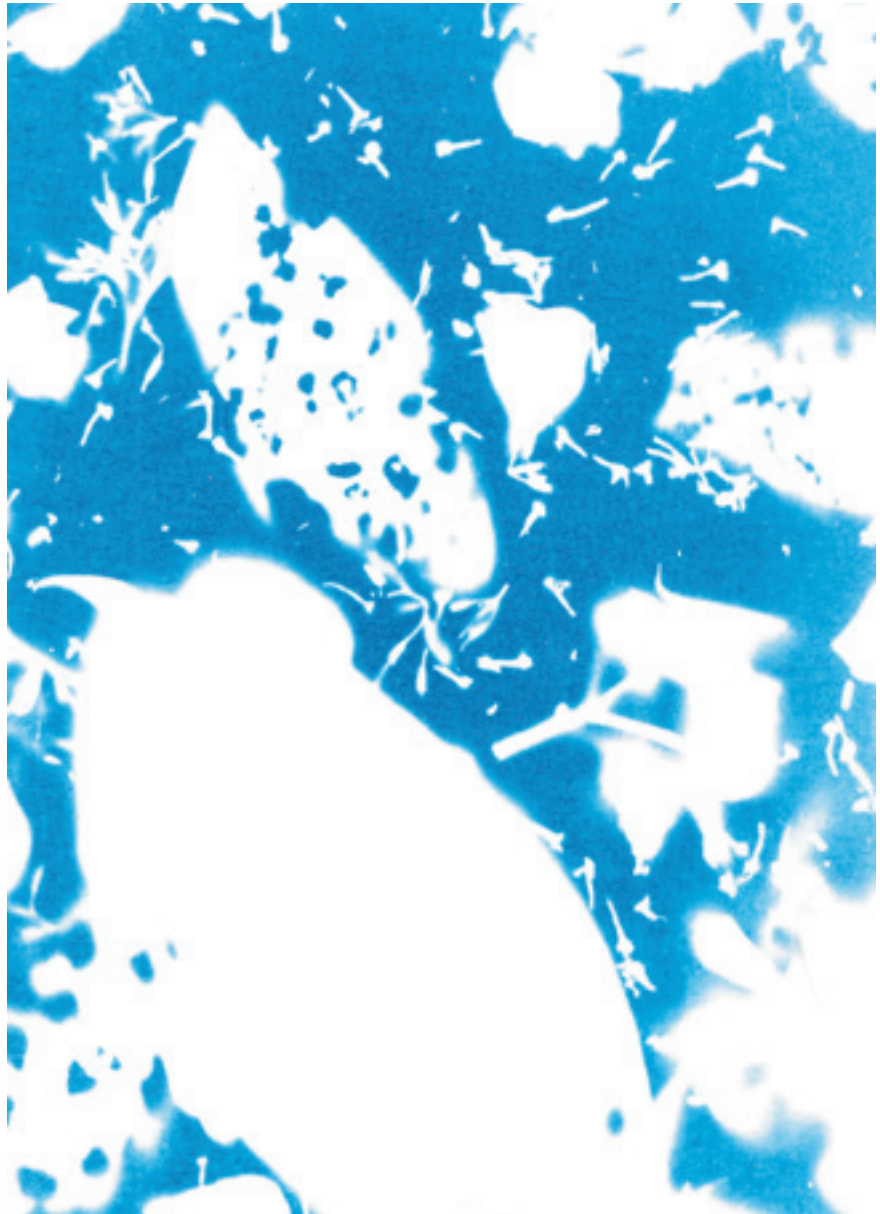
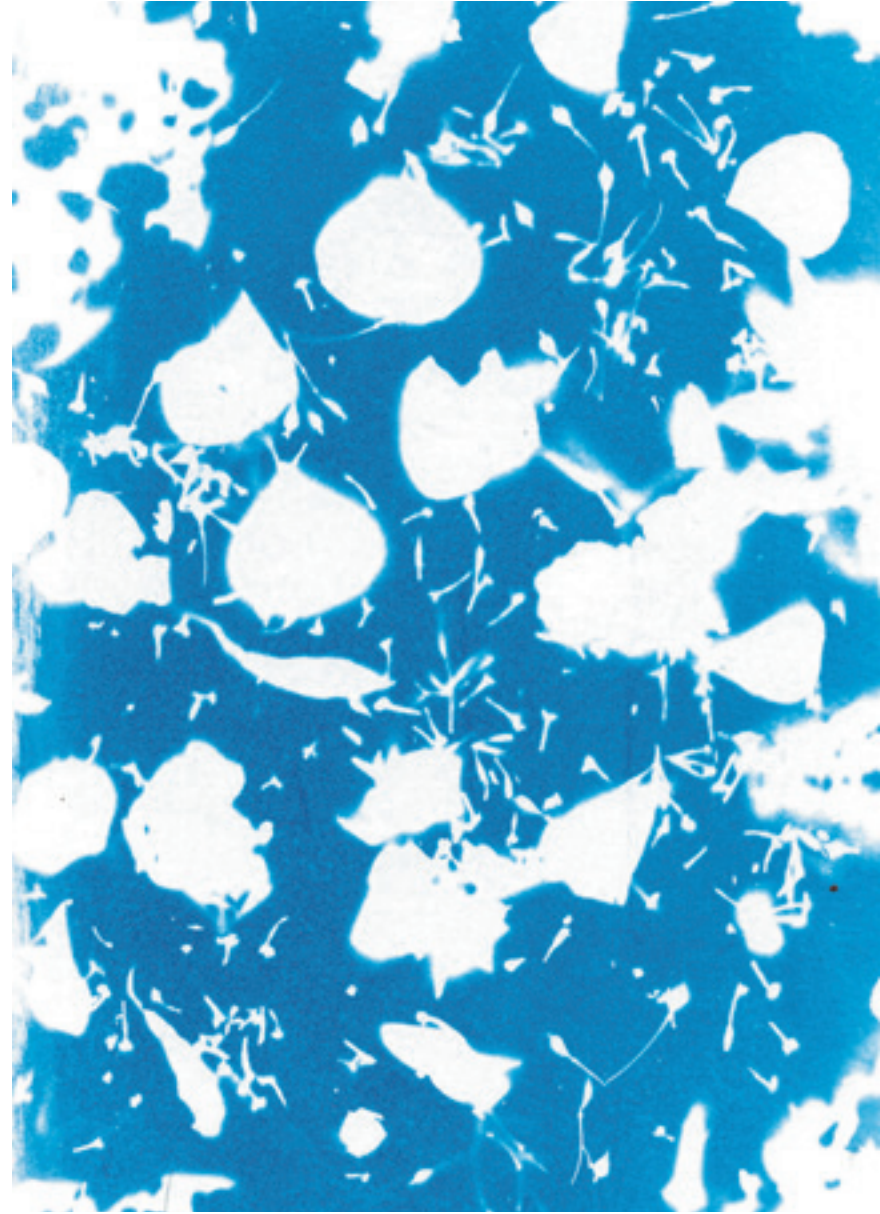


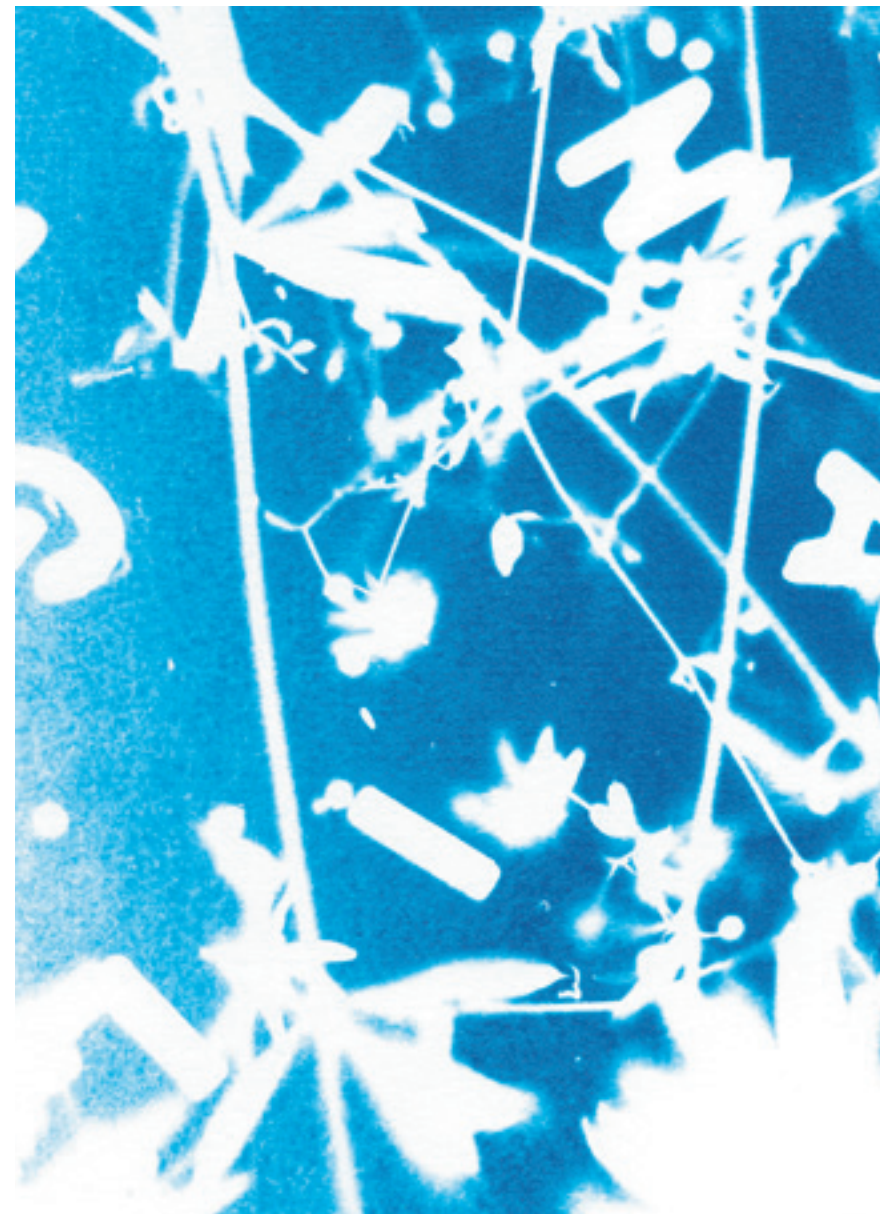
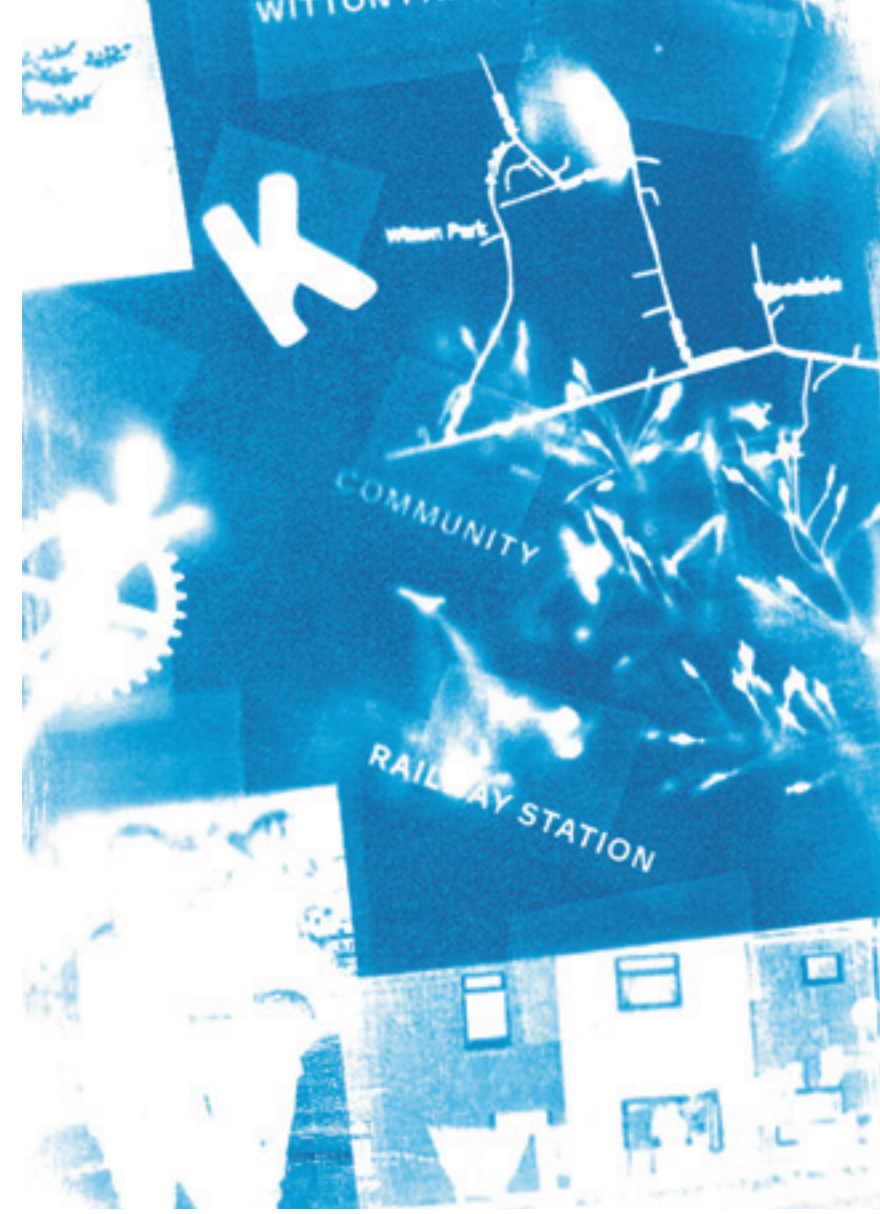
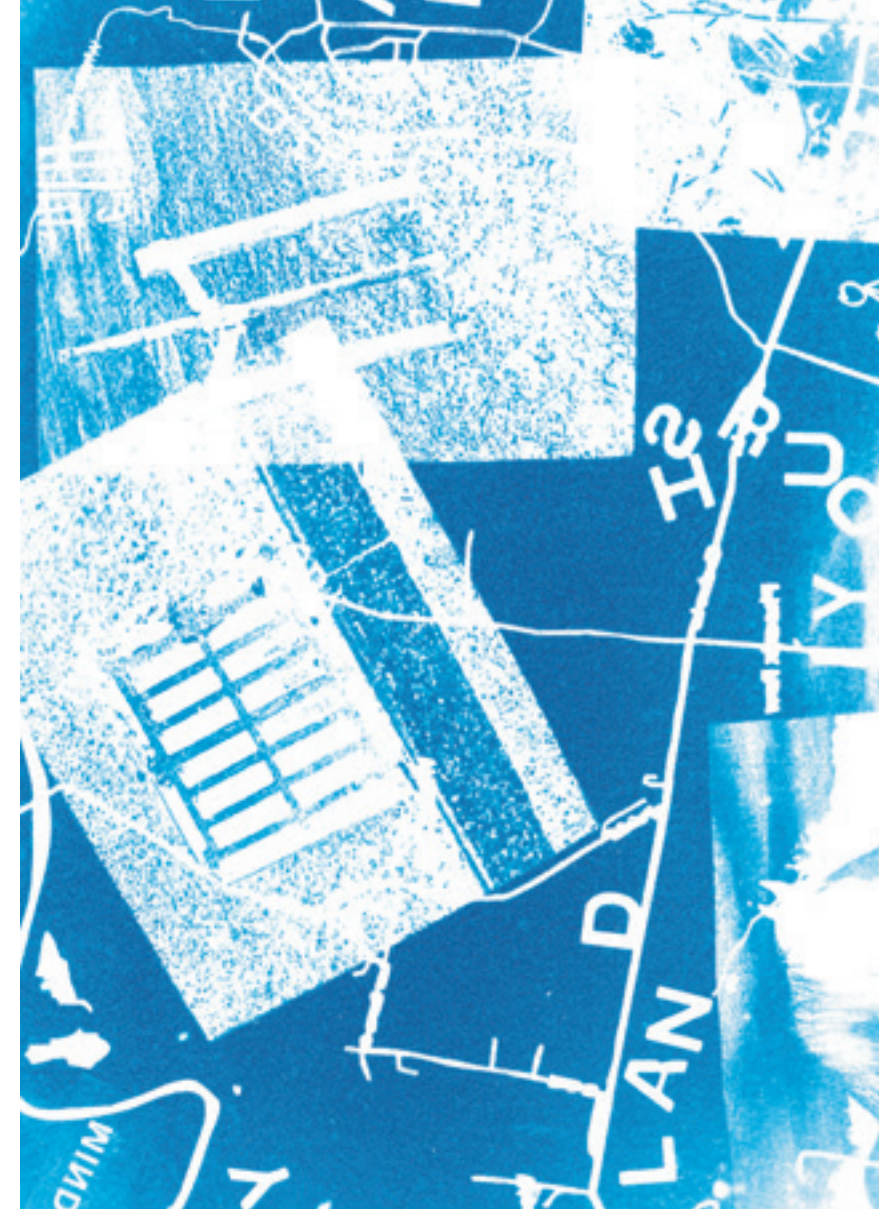
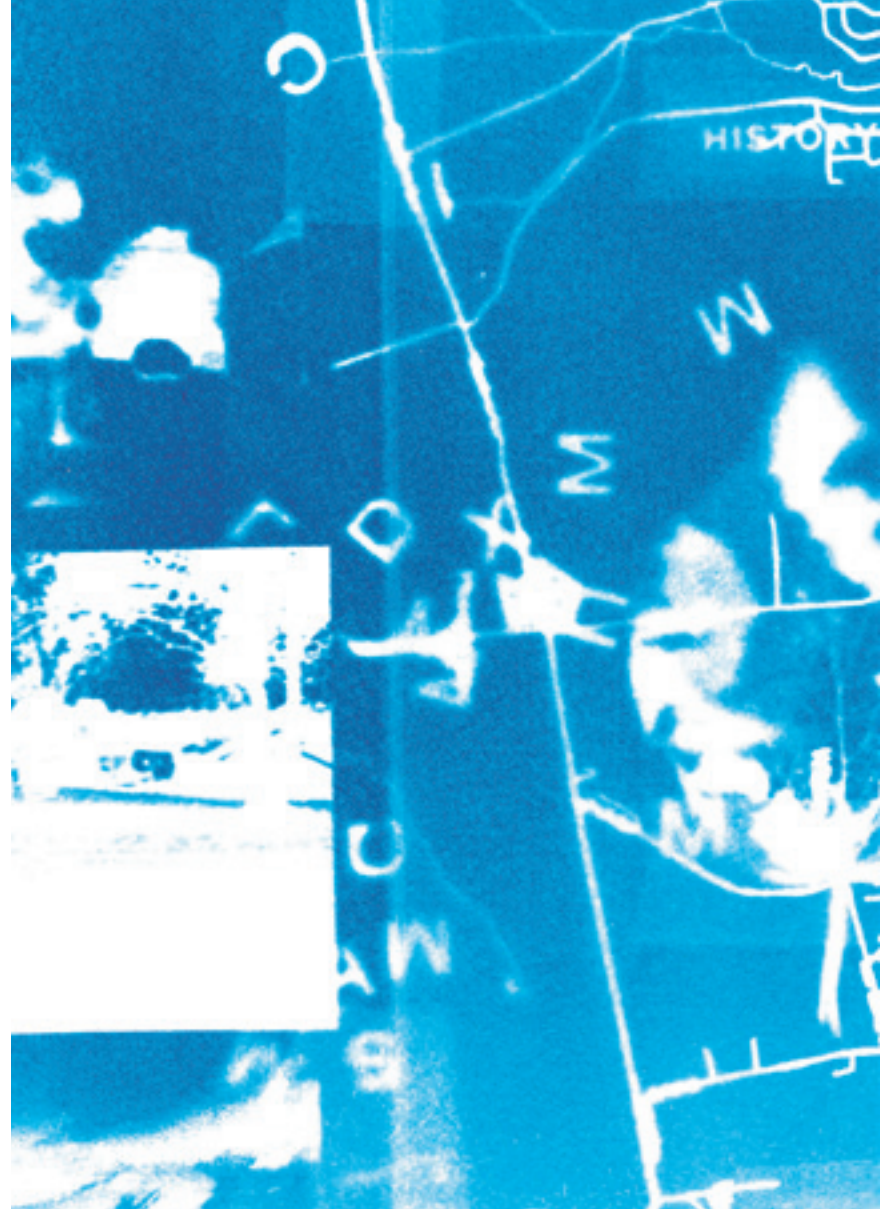
Today a simple dog walkers trial. In weeks ahead this section will be widened out to form part of the walking cycling route from Witton Park as far as Locomotion, then on to Hopetown. George Stephenson his son Robert were here in October 1821 surveying the line from the Coalfields.

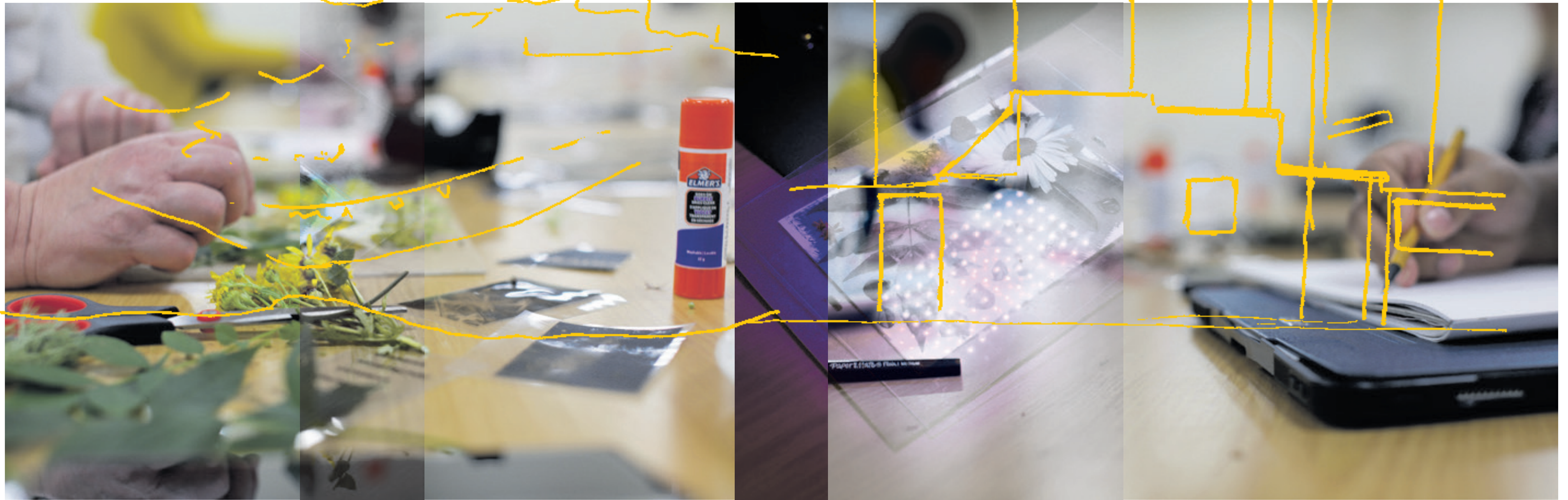


the Industrial Revolution starts here









from china
in 1931

Hand Painted
on Rice Paper







SNAPSHOT



STRUCTURE



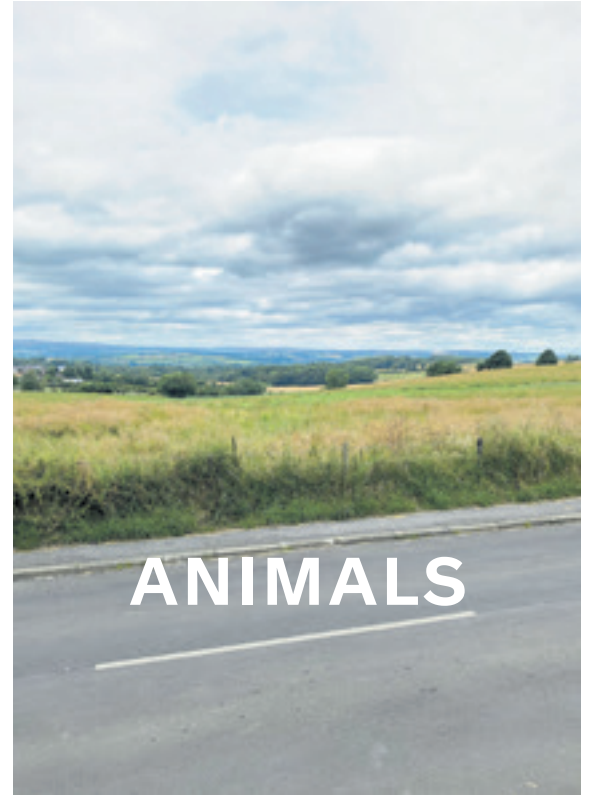
NEW YORK



BIG TREE



HYDRANGEAS



ANIMALS



BENEATH
HERE



PARCHED



TOTALLY

